

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), a long-time champion of fair federal employee pay and pay parity, said today that he was pleased that President Bush's FY 2008 budget proposal provides an equal pay adjustment for members of both the armed services and the federal civilian workforce.

However, Hoyer expressed concern that the proposed 3 percent adjustment may be insufficient to ensure the government is able to recruit and retain quality workers, notably in the wake of last year's inadequate increase of 2.2 percent.

"Last year federal employees were shortchanged with the lowest pay adjustment in nearly twenty years," stated Hoyer. "Our talented federal workforce is the bedrock of our government, providing a myriad of vital services to millions of Americans. The work undertaken by these talented men and women is critically important, and their compensation needs to fairly reflect that."

Hoyer continued, "A 3 percent adjustment is obviously higher than last year's insufficient increase, but we will need to assess this proposal in the context of the long-term impact of recent adjustment levels on an already significant pay gap between federal employees and their private sector counterparts."

In late January, Rep. Hoyer organized a bipartisan letter to President Bush, signed by nine other Washington-area Representatives, urging equal pay adjustments for the civil service and

the military in his 2008 budget. Hoyer has said providing the same average annual salary adjustments for uniformed personnel and federal civilian employees has enjoyed strong bipartisan support for several years because it is the only way, short of following the 1990 Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act, of preventing the vast compensation gap that exists between public and private sector salaries from widening.

"The Washington-area delegation works hard every year to provide federal employees with a fair pay adjustment that follows the principle of pay parity and recognizes the vital contributions of the federal workforce," said Hoyer.

In the weeks ahead, Hoyer said he intends to investigate the adequacy of next year's proposed salary adjustment, consulting with respected members of the House Armed Services Committee, Government Reform Committee, as well as representatives of the military and federal civilian workforce.

"I intend to look very closely at the proposal and consider it in terms of what is responsible for keeping our government operating as the best in the world, as well as what is fair in compensating our federal workforce for the vital services they provide," said Hoyer.

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